

## Chapter 6: Comments and Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. This chapter summarizes the results of UDOT's efforts to identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination. In accordance with the International Association for Public Participation Spectrum (IAP2, 2006), the goal of the public involvement plan developed for this project is to provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, and/or solutions.

Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods. Agency and public participation meetings are summarized in **Section 6.1** and other outreach methods are discussed in **Section 6.2**. **Section 6.3** explains how comments have been responded to throughout the process. Responses to comments received on the draft EA are detailed in **Appendix E**. All written comments are available for review at the office of Michael Baker Jr., Inc., located at 6955 South Union Park Center, Suite 370, Midvale, Utah 84047. Substantive written comments are included in **Appendix D** and **E**.

### 6.1 Agency and Public Participation Meetings

The primary agency and public participation meetings held to date are summarized in the following sections. These meetings are outlined in **Table 6.1-1**.

**Table 6.1-1 Agency and Public Participation Meetings**

| Date   | Meeting Type  |
|--|---|
| March 3, 2004  | Public Scoping Meeting and Project Workshop                         |
| March 3, 2004  | Agency Scoping Meeting  |
| March 14, 2006                                       | Focus Workshops   |
| April 11, 2006<br>June 21, 2006                      | Other Interagency Meetings  |
| December 8, 2005<br>March 23, 2006<br>April 28, 2006 | Other Coordination with Local Entities (Moab City and Grand County) |
| December 12, 2006                                    | Public Hearing  |

### 6.1.1 Public Scoping Meeting and Project Workshop

NEPA scoping was initiated in 2004 as part of the Bridge Feasibility Study (UDOT, 2004e). A formal comment period was also provided between February 19 and April 2, 2004. UDOT placed paid advertisements in local and statewide newspapers announcing the start of the scoping process. Flyers were distributed to individuals on the project mailing list, which included property owners located adjacent to US-191 within the project area, local businesses, local organizations, and local officials. Representatives from various stakeholder groups were contacted and asked to participate in the project workshop that followed the public scoping meeting.

The public scoping meeting was held on March 3, 2004 at the Grand County Senior Center in Moab. The meeting was held in an open house format and seven people attended. Participants were given a comment sheet and project flyer containing copies of the display boards and contact information. The displays included study area maps, current traffic data, and informational boards. A PowerPoint presentation was shown and attendees were encouraged to submit questions or comments and discuss the project with team members.

A project workshop followed the public scoping meeting where the participants broke into small groups facilitated by project team members. Some 23 people from various community groups attended. Participants were asked to identify concepts or concerns on project maps and then prioritize these comments into high, moderate, or low categories. Comments that were considered a high priority in 2004 pertained to:

- Bridge
- Bicyclists/pedestrians
- Capacity
- Business Access
- Courthouse Wash
- Wildlife
- Drainage
- Intersections
- Construction
- Recreation
- Traffic Calming
- Moab UMTRA Site
- North Corridor Gateway Plan
- Cultural Properties

### 6.1.2 Agency Scoping Meeting

An agency scoping meeting was held on March 3, 2004 to solicit agency comments and to help identify issues in the corridor that needed further review during the environmental process. Fifteen people attended, representing eight agencies. Comments received from agency representatives pertained to:

- Right of way and Arches National Park
- Easement from FFSL
- Stream Alteration Permitting
- Cultural Resources
- Parking and Access at Courthouse Wash
- North Corridor Gateway Plan
- Lions Park
- Water Rights Permitting
- Cultural Resources
- Desert Bighorn Sheep
- Traffic Survey
- BLM Kiosk
- Bridge Location

### 6.1.3 Focus Workshops

UDOT held two focus workshops on March 14, 2006 at the Grand County Council Chambers in Moab. The intention of the workshops was to discuss the purpose and need for the project and to review the preliminary Build Alternative for the bridge and roadway. Letters were sent on February 14, 2006 (see **Appendix D**) to the project mailing list notifying them of the upcoming workshops. Holding two workshops allowed the project team the ability to accommodate all stakeholders in a small group setting. An overview of the project was provided. A project handout was distributed to participants that described the project background, process schedule, illustrated the preliminary Build Alternative, and provided contact information. A larger scroll plot of the preliminary Build Alternative was available for review and use during the workshops.

Workshop #1 included 11 participants who identified their issues through small group discussions. Their issues are categorized and summarized as follows:

#### **Bicyclists/pedestrians**

- Will be using the new pedestrian bridge
- If possible, need to accommodate during construction

#### **Desert bighorn sheep north of the bridge**

- Fencing is not recommended
- Caution signs could make travelers aware of this issue
- Will need to prevent observers from stopping in travel lane during construction

#### **Access to rock art south of Courthouse Wash**

- This access will need to remain open after construction

#### **Planned BLM kiosk by Potash Road**

- There is no determined location at this time
- Specific location is not important to BLM

**Timing of construction**

- Avoid peak business times
- Notify travelers, not just Moab City

**Utilities**

- Grand County water/sewer would like to attach utilities to the bridge
- Frontier Communications has equipment at Station 172 (box on west side)
- Questar may want to extend to the bridge, but not across the bridge
- UDOT's permit process would apply to any utility requests across the bridge. This process should be initiated early so that additional loads can be considered in design.

**Design issues**

- It is difficult to turn at North MiVida Drive, suggest a turning lane
- It is difficult to turn at 400 North, suggest a traffic signal

**Aesthetics**

- Artwork could be constructed on pillars that are not part of the bridge structure, but placed at the approaches
- Could be locally or privately funded
- The community could get people involved by having a contest for the design

**Agency Coordination**

- USDOE will be adding acceleration/deceleration lanes in front of their property during the 2006 construction season.
- Grand County Master Plan and Arches Transportation Plan are proposing that Lions Park would be the hub for shuttles going to Arches National Park. This would be a local shuttle service and would not be managed by the park.
- Arches Transportation Plan is expected to be complete by Summer 2006.

Workshop #2 included 10 participants who as collective group focused on the need for a separated bike lane south of the Colorado River Bridge. Near the end of the session, participants reviewed the project maps and discussed any other concerns they had with the project team. The following summarizes the discussion held in this workshop:

**Bicyclists/pedestrians**

- A 10-ft detached bike path would be much safer and fit better within the context of the community than using the proposed sidewalk and shoulder of the road for bicycle and pedestrians.
- Moab has received enhancement funds to build a bike path along US-191. Enhancement funds may not be enough to implement the entire path.

- Moab City plans to annex land up to the Colorado River Bridge and the gateway plan requires new businesses to build a detached bike lane as they develop.
- The path would follow the natural ground. A minimum of five feet is typically needed between the road and the bike path, but additional separation is desired where it can be obtained.
- A separated path would result in additional displacements, especially between 500 West and 400 North.
- Might need to stop the separated path north of constrained areas, or consider changing the typical section to a four-foot shoulder and 10-foot sidewalk in these areas.
- Sidewalk and bike path is redundant, would only need one and the bike path is preferred.

**Drainage**

- The city has drainage concerns and suggested that corridors for outfalls be identified now so as the area is developed, they can tie into the City and County system.
- Drainage issues should be addressed between Moab, Grand County, and UDOT.
- UDOT is only responsible for stormwater from within their right of way.

Written comments were also solicited as part of the focus workshops and include:

**Colorado River Bridge Replacement**

- Questar Gas does not currently have utilities located across the Colorado River. There are currently no plans to extend the system across the river.
- Would love to see real aesthetic consideration. Something semi-architectural-historic that would take the gorgeous environment into consideration. The gateway to Moab should be exciting, enticing, memorable, and fun.
- Re-study bypass for trucks at portal.

**Roadway Widening – 400 North to Colorado River Bridge**

- There may be Questar Gas mains affected by a road widening in this area. Please contact Questar for updated utility plans.
- Lots of traffic troubles in this area. A traffic light at 400 North would slow traffic, solve lots of problems, and improve visibility. Allow for a crosswalk that would be honored hopefully.
- Detached bike paths!

### **Courthouse Wash Structure Widening**

- There are no Questar Gas services in this area or planned.
- Tie in with bikes and pedestrians.

### **Roadway Widening – Colorado River to Courthouse Wash, Courthouse Wash to SR-279 (Potash Road)**

- There are no Questar Gas services in this area or planned.

#### **6.1.4 Other Interagency Meetings**

A meeting was held on April 11, 2006 at the Division of Wildlife Resources in Price to discuss the threatened and endangered species in the project area, identify concerns, and obtain concurrence of the species that should be included in the BA. Agencies in attendance included USFWS, BLM, Division of Water Rights, Division of Wildlife Resources, and UDOT. Other agencies invited to attend include Arches National Park, USACE, and FFSL. Handouts containing project information, schedule, proposed typical sections, and list of species were distributed. The discussion centered on how the new bridge would be constructed, how many piers would be included in the new bridge design, and possible mitigation measures. Agency concerns were incorporated and addressed in the BA. The USFWS issued their biological opinion in October 2006 (see **Appendix B**).

On June 21, 2006, UDOT held a meeting with the Division of Wildlife Resources and The Nature Conservancy to discuss the Scott Matheson Wetland Preserve and Section 4(f) impacts. The discussion focused on proposed discharge locations in the northern portion of the preserve (see **Chapter 4** for further detail).

#### **6.1.5 Other Coordination with Local Entities**

Individual meetings were held with the Moab City Planning and Community Development Director and the Grand County Planning Administrator on December 8, 2005 to gather data for the analysis. Some of the topics discussed with each entity were annexation of land, water and sewer, zoning, land use and development, traffic, roadway construction restrictions, population, housing, environmental justice, and trails.

Several additional phone conferences have been held, mostly relating to gaining a better understanding of existing and planned trails, and Lions Park. To address comments from the 2006 focus workshops, a field review meeting was held on March 23, 2006 with representatives from UDOT, the Moab Trails Alliance, BLM, Moab Springs Ranch, Horrocks Engineers, and Moab City to review possible locations for

the US-191 bike path. The results of this meeting are summarized in **Appendix D** (March 29, 2006 e-mail from Olsen).

Project representatives provided an overview of the project and answered questions at a combined Moab City/Grand County council working meeting on April 28, 2006 and at the Moab Chamber Luncheon on December 12, 2006.

### **6.1.6 Public Hearing**

A public hearing in an open house setting was held December 12, 2006 at the Grand Center in Moab. Project maps and displays were presented for review. Project representatives were available to answer questions one-on-one with residents and business owners. A project handout containing project information, schedule, proposed typical sections were available and comments were solicited. Fifty-three people signed in as attending the hearing.

Comments received at the public hearing and during the comment period have been addressed throughout the EA and are included in **Table 6.3-1**. A representative summary of the comments received is included below:

#### **Traffic and Safety**

- Traffic is not a problem in Moab.
- Four lanes from the bridge through town seem to be a viable consideration.
- Hard to turn left from 400 North to Main Street.
- Don't remove on-street parking in 400 North and 600 North areas.
- Need to slow down traffic from 500 North to 400 North.
- Need stop lights at 500 North and 400 North.

#### **Recreation and Tourism**

- Moab City should continue bike lanes through town.
- Can the bike path and walkway go another route to avoid impacting businesses?
- The proposed plan shows responsiveness to comments made in original scoping (the cross-section from 600 North to bridge now shows a detached meandering trail on the east side).
- Displacements include businesses that are tied to recreation and tourism.

#### **Business Displacements**

- Alternatives for this plan are very cut and dried (build or no build), with no option in between.
- There are some other options, which can have a less detrimental and devastating effect on those businesses marked for removal.

- Do the road lanes and turning lanes have to be as wide as 12 feet?
- What about raising the bike path and sidewalk on an elevated walkway/bikeway which would give extra space?
- Does the shoulder need to be eight feet?
- Does the walkway need to be six feet?
- Revisit this proposal to design a roadway that is as narrow as allowable to protect business properties from being ruined.
- It would be terrible to destroy buildings that are part of a small business.
- The removal of businesses and the effect that it will have on people's lives is very detrimental to the community.
- Avoid displacing businesses altogether or compensate businesses fairly.
- Make a reasonable decision as soon as possible, so these people can go on with their lives and their business plans.
- It is not fair to take from the side that is not encroaching and allow violators who knowingly built and encroached within the last 12 years, to not be held accountable.
- Encourage UDOT to look at options that will allow the project to proceed while preserving access and use by property owners.
- Communicate clearly with the affected property owners so that they may assist in developing fair, equitable, and workable solutions to the design and location challenges of this project.
- Attempting to slate properties for removal without even bothering to notify us is shameful.
- It would be more ethical to present all the information earlier to avoid situations like the one.
- Make every possible allowance for the needs of the businesses in the impact zone.

**Air Quality**

- Control fugitive dust in accordance with R307-205-5.

**Natural Resources**

- Apply for the appropriate permits.
- Monitor appropriate water quality parameters for effectiveness of sediment control and other applicable BMPs.
- Address major drainage issues.
- Avoid concentration of storm water and mimic natural flow patterns.
- Plants native to the particular area (such as the list recently used by the USDOE), should be used in revegetation efforts.



- Funds and plans for restoration of disturbed roadsides should be in place before starting construction to prevent invasive plants.

**General**

- This procedure is very good.
- The process has been fair and they have taken our input and made adjustments when we have asked them to.
- Consider combining this project with the pedestrian bridge project into one shared span.
- The Colorado River Bridge widening and rebuild is antiquated and needs to be repaired.
- Does the community "need" it or does "Walmart" want it?

## **6.2 Other Outreach Methods**

### **6.2.1 Origin and Destination Surveys**

During the 2004 scoping, the project team conducted a roadway origin and destination survey. "Project issues" flyers were distributed to 1,000 motorists who stopped to participate in the survey. These surveys yield data about the origin and destination of each trip, reason for the trip, and possible impacts of various changes to travel patterns in and around Moab. Of the 1,000 surveys distributed, 264 surveys were returned. The results of this survey are outlined in Appendix A of the Bridge Feasibility Report (UDOT, 2004e).

### **6.2.2 Project Website**

A project website has been developed and includes a project background, the project schedule, maps of the project area, and a summary of issues and concerns. Project handouts, meeting summaries, and a summary of public and agency comments are included on the website, as well as contact information for asking additional questions or to submit additional comments about the project. A summary of the public hearing as well as responses to comments received at the public hearing is included. Where practical, project documents have also been made available for downloading from the website <http://www.udot.utah.gov/coloradoriverbridge>.

### **6.2.3 Media Coverage/News Articles**

A few news articles resulting from UDOT issued press releases and public meeting notices have been published throughout the project in the Moab Times Independent.

The scoping and public hearing notices were also published in the Utah statewide newspapers.

#### **6.2.4 Consultation with Agencies and Other Interested Parties**

Consultation with agencies and other interested parties has been conducted throughout the NEPA process using letters, phone calls, and/or email discussions. Agencies and other interested parties contacted about this project include:

##### **Federal Agencies**

- BLM
- FEMA, Region VIII
- USACE
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- USDOE
- EPA, Region VIII
- USFWS
- NPS

##### **Native American Tribes**

- Hopi Cultural Preservation
- Navajo Nation
- Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
- White Mesa Ute Council
- Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah/Ouray Agency
- Southern Ute Tribe
- Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah

##### **State Agencies**

- Resource Development Coordinating Committee
- Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
- UDNR
  - FFSL
  - Division of Parks and Recreation
  - Division of Water Rights
  - Division of Wildlife Resources
  - Division of Water Resources
- UDEQ
  - DAQ
  - DDW

- DERR
- Division of Radiation Control
- DSHW
- DWQ
- Utah Division of State History

**Other Interested Parties**

- Grand County
- Moab City
- Adjacent Property Owners (Residents and Business Owners)
- Moab Trails Alliance
- Moab Trail Mix Committee for Non-Motorized Trails
- The Nature Conservancy
- Other Individuals (who attended meetings, requested materials, or provided comments)

**Appendix D** includes the primary written consultation between federal, state, and local agencies, and other interested parties, as listed in **Table D-1**. Additionally, the USACE, USFWS, USDOE, EPA, NPS, BLM, and UDNR were given an opportunity to review the Administrative Draft EA and responses to comments received from these agencies were reflected within the Draft EA. The DWQ, DAQ (through RDCC), Moab City, and other interested parties commented on the Draft EA (see **Appendix E**).

## **6.3 Responses to Comments**

### **6.3.1 Responses to Comments Received Prior to Release of Draft EA**

Comments received during the 2004 scoping process were incorporated as applicable into the Bridge Feasibility Study (UDOT, 2004e). One important note to consider when reviewing early comments received on the project is that following the completion of the Bridge Feasibility Study, transportation enhancement funding for the Colorado River Pedestrian Bridge was secured. The Colorado River Pedestrian Bridge Project now accommodates pedestrians on a separated structure and a sidewalk is no longer recommended on the Colorado River Bridge. The proposed shoulder would accommodate incidental pedestrian use; however, pedestrians are encouraged to use the pedestrian bridge that is separated from US-191 traffic.

Additionally, the preliminary Build Alternative proposed during the 2006 focus workshops included sidewalks on both sides of US-191 south of the bridge and a striped bikepath within the shoulder. As a result of comments received in the 2006

focus workshops, the Build Alternative was modified to accommodate a separated bikepath along US-191 south of the bridge on the east side. As such, a striped bikepath in the shoulder is no longer proposed and a sidewalk is not proposed where the bikepath would be provided. The bikepath would be constructed by local entities as a separate transportation enhancement project. In some cases, such as where steep rock slopes exist, the bikepath is expected to need to be reconstructed as part of the US-191 Colorado River Bridge Project to accommodate the widened roadway.

Most other comments provided information or data that is relevant to and used in the analysis presented in this EA. In some cases, individual responses have been provided (as shown in **Table D-1** of **Appendix D**).

### 6.3.2 Responses to Comments Received on the Draft EA

The DWQ, DAQ (through RDCC), Moab City, and other interested parties commented on the Draft EA. Comments received on the Draft EA or as part of the public hearing process have been addressed throughout this Final EA, as applicable. A summary of these comments is presented in **Section 6.1.6**. Individual comments and detailed responses are included in **Appendix E**.